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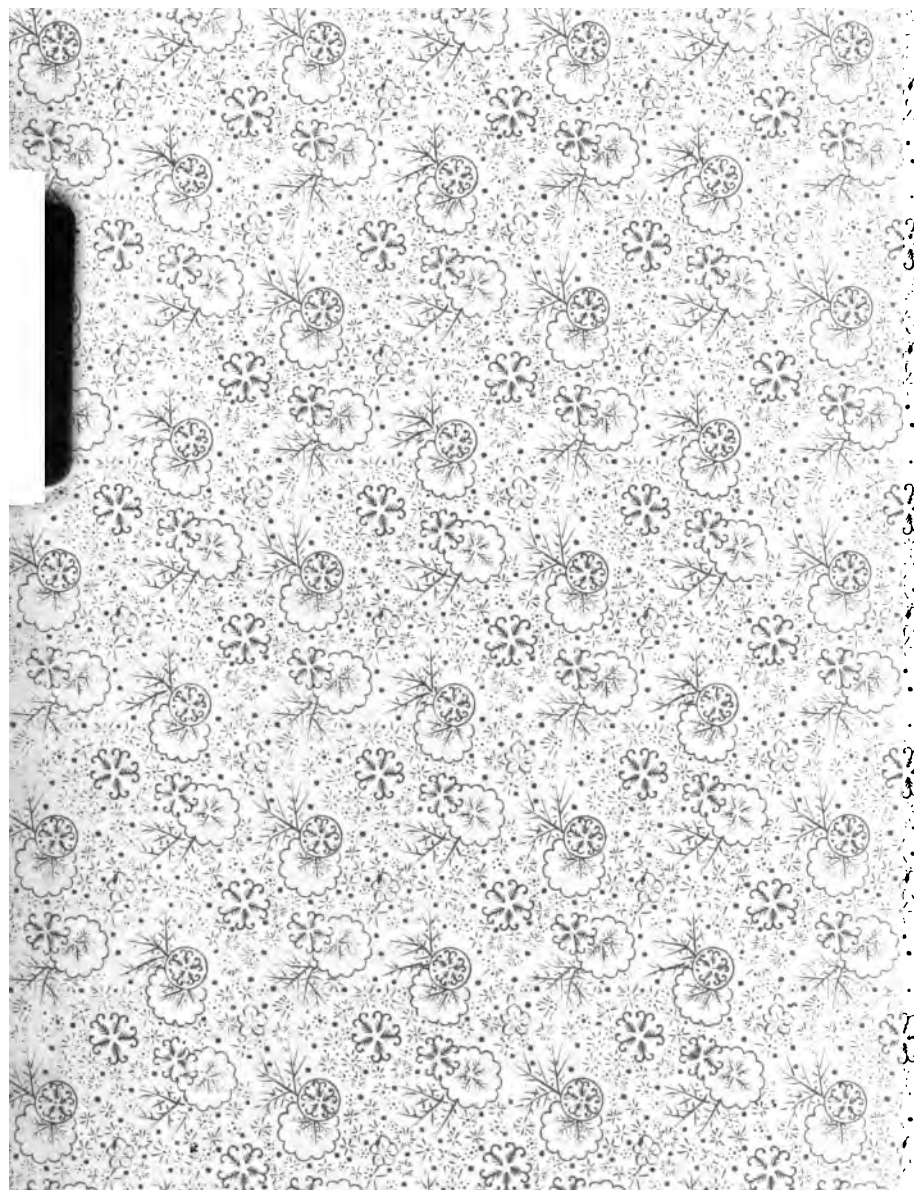
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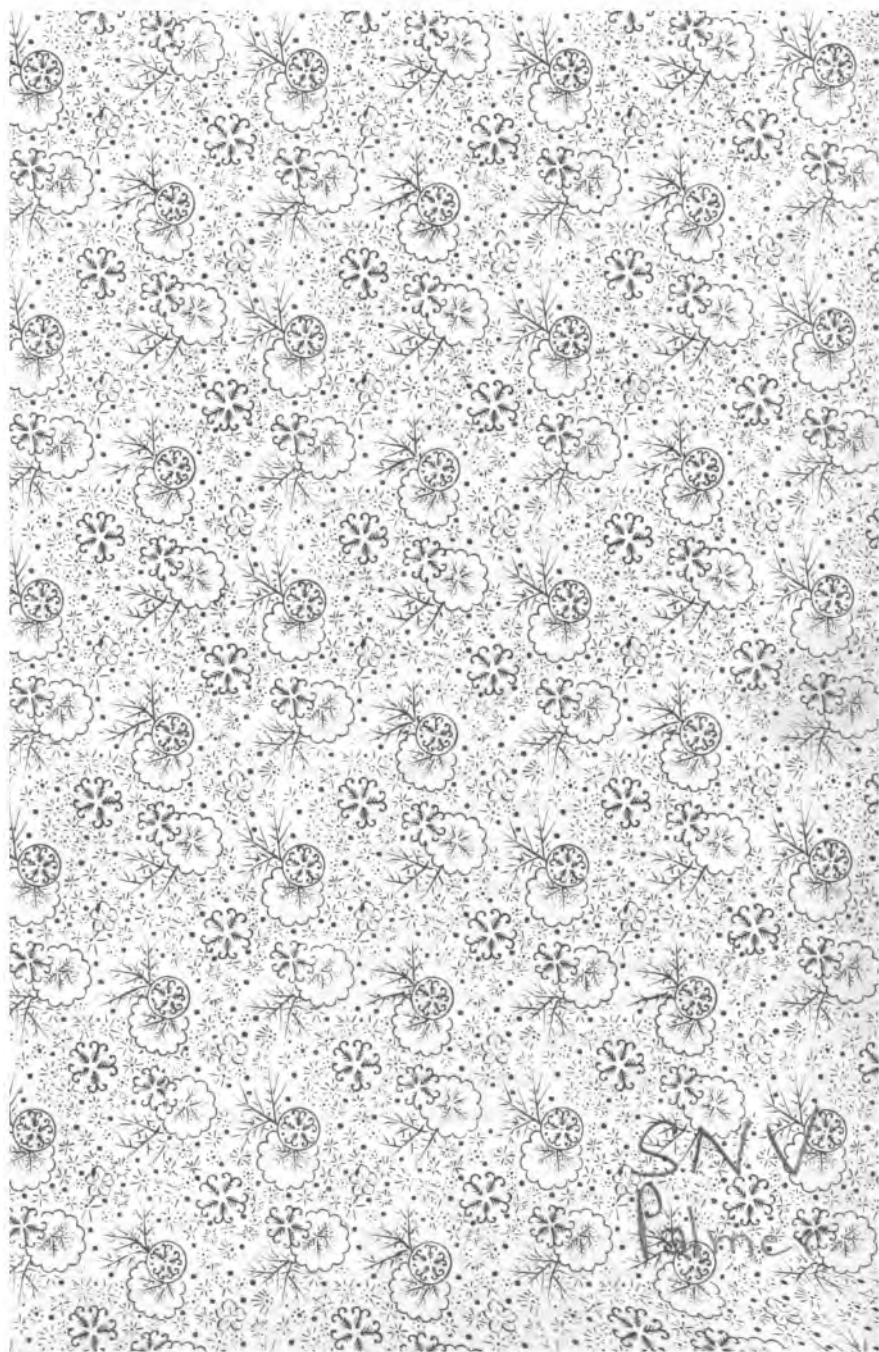


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DIVORCE

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1. Divorce

2. Marriage

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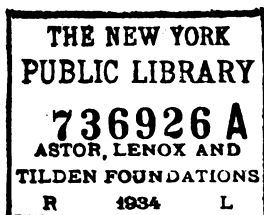
DIVORCE

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It is related of a certain famous but crusty judge, that his wife, after a period of ill health, went one day to consult a new physician. Upon her return home she gave her husband an account of the interview, exclaiming at the end of her description :

“There! I forgot to ask him the cause of all the trouble.”

“Cause!” growled her husband, “do you think he would tell you the cause? When a physician does that he abolishes himself.”

It can scarcely be hoped that even a complete revelation of the cause of marital unhappiness would be enough, in itself, to abolish the evil, but we may confidently assert that an earnest inquiry into such cases and a conscientious and intelligent effort toward their abolition, would result in great gain. We can go even farther and claim that there is an avenue of escape — one not by any means impossible to travelers through this world of lights and shadows. It is my purpose in the following treatise, to point out, as clearly as possible,

this avenue, not altogether new, and yet not old enough to be imprinted, as some day it will, by many, many feet.

Before entering upon my examination, it may be well to glance at some conditions of social life, and see what manner of women we have to deal with, for, although I do not believe that woman is the only cause of the trouble, I firmly believe she is the chief hope of its remedy.

It is said that after examining a single bone of any strange fish, Agassiz was able to draw the entire animal. I cannot pretend to like skill in the delineation of human character—such character being much too complex and contradictory to be successfully constructed upon the presentation of a single trait. Nevertheless, certain distinct types are so clearly resultant from certain conditions of social life, that given the one, we may, with confidence, look for the other. For instance, several hundred years ago, social life was in a very different state from that in which we find it to-day, and the women of that period differed widely from those of our time. Even in our own day we are struck by the difference presented by the women of various countries. If we look at those of the East, we find them childish, dependent, winning, obedient, idle, sly, as a natural result of a social opinion which awards to woman the position of toy of the other sex. Now, whoever objects to the character of such women, should lend his aid toward the formation of an entirely different state of

social opinion from that which is responsible for the results which he deplures.

Many of us are opposed to the reform known under the title of Woman's Rights, and earnestly maintain that the success of its main object would tend toward the abolition of feminine gentleness and modesty. Nevertheless, it cannot be denied, by those whose sense of honor is stronger than their prejudice, that an increase of womanly earnestness and dignity is already noticeable and must, by the fair-minded, be directly traced to the attempt to put more power into female hands, and furthermore that this increase is anything but an occasion for regret. The ballot has not yet been universally granted to women, but owing to the efforts of some to obtain this privilege, many indirect ends have been compassed. Doors, heretofore closed, have swung wide open, and women have entered, and successfully worked in many fields formerly reserved for men. More than this; in the steadily enlarging band of working women there unquestionably is an increase, not only in strength of character and general intelligence, but even in many of those essential feminine qualities which form the very essence of womanhood—a gain, which is offset by no modifying loss, and which is, to some extent, shared by women who are apparently still walking in the old beaten paths. Whichever we decide it to be—in consequence of, or in spite of, the Woman's Rights movement,—we are forced to acknowledge that the very womanhood for whose safety we trembled, has devel-

oped nobly within the past few years. We may look, if we will, with longing eyes, to the olden times, or to the present times, in some European countries, and sigh for the quiet, satisfied women—notable housewives, devoted mothers, and obedient wives. We may deplore the time when women first began to cherish a dream of independence, and set that down in life's journal as the day when the most dangerous seeds of marital troubles were sown. Our opinions on this point are not able to abolish certain facts—the dream was cherished, and to-day in thousands of cases, it is a reality. The old type of woman, like the Indian race, is slowly dying, and, figuratively speaking, her bones, like those of the mastodon, will soon be exhibited as objects of wonder, if not of admiration.

These are simply facts. What more? Just this: that women of this new type cannot live happily under the laws that fitted women of the olden type. Agitations, both domestic and civil, will be inevitable until these different conditions of character are recognized by different laws. Married life has already suffered many upheavals and disturbances owing to the changes of opinion that have so powerfully affected female character. Those who assert that the old way was the safest and happiest, and that a household with two heads must, of necessity, be divided against itself, are not wholly without reason on their side. But a statement of views on this point holds but a secondary position in my purpose, as I, who chiefly

wish to bring forward here a few facts to prove that character, and especially female character, has undergone important changes within the last fifty years; that married life must attempt to harmonize itself with such changes, and that the old conditions of marriage are as unsuited to the new conditions of character, as are many of the old church formulas and customs to the new conditions of belief.

In pursuance of this object, a study of some of the commonest troubles of married life, and a few suggestions as to remedies, will be in place. This study has long been of interest to me and has been facilitated, not only by much discussion of the subject with many and various kinds of men and women, but also by professional consultations with married people seeking release from their bonds.

In general, when we turn our attention to this subject, we are too apt to confine ourselves to objects near at hand. We look at one married pair, and say the trouble lies in the exacting nature of the wife; or at another, and decide that the husband's irritable temper is the cause of all fault. In this manner we might go on indefinitely, each particular case furnishing, to our minds, its particular cause. If nothing more than this can be done, remedy is almost hopeless, for as many cures as causes would be necessary. But a study of human nature and of various conditions of social life, will enable us to probe far down into this great sore of humanity, and discover some of the deep-seated causes of the eruption.

Passing then, these various minor troubles which affect individual cases and may be classed as surface conditions, we will confine our attention to a few of the more general causes of disagreement in married life. It has seemed to me that these might be summed up as follows :

1. *The ignorance of women in the conduct of households.*
2. *The lack of sympathy between men and women.*
3. *The lack of proper respect, in both men and women, for womanly employments.*
4. *The lack of business training in women.*
5. *The failure, on the part of the husband, to respect the wife's ownership of herself.*
6. *Habits of dissipation.*
7. *The undue idealism with which young people enter married life.*
8. *The interference of outsiders.*
9. *Finances.*
10. *The balance of power now resting in the hands of the husband.*

For the cause and remedy of almost all of these sources of trouble, we must go back to a period of life preceding maturity, and in so doing, we must hold mothers accountable. It is my earnest belief that these mothers have the power to abolish marital unhappiness, and I trust that the day is not very far distant, when they will come to a full realization of their privileges and responsibilities in this very respect.

When they do so, motherhood will assume an importance which will make all comparison with other vocations of life, out of place. It will wear a new diadem, and shine with a luster that will dim all other earthly glory. I confess myself astonished when I look about me, and see how seriously many women take the most trifling duties, and how persistently they neglect some of their greatest privileges, and most solemn obligations. Let no one understand me to speak slightly of womankind. I am not likely to even think disrespectfully of the sex to which I owe almost all of worth and happiness I have known; but notwithstanding this, I cannot be blind to the grave mistakes women are daily making. It would be interesting, if possible, to take a peculiar census, to ascertain how many mothers are in the habit of talking, frequently and earnestly, with their sons, from their childhood up, on those questions which so vitally affect the happiness of wives. How many mothers are earnestly striving to inculcate, in their sons, habits and characteristics which would tend to produce good husbands. I apprehend that the proportion of women who are thus exerting a mighty and direct influence toward making happy marriages, would be found to be pitifully small.

I do not lose sight of the fact that all moral and christian training tends strongly in the direction specified, and that mothers are the ones to whose influence we must ascribe most of the world's morality. I only wish to call attention to the fact that much especial

training is needed, and that in giving such training, mothers are notably lacking. If a young prince were taught truth, industry, and purity, it would certainly be greatly to his advantage later, as king, but something more than this would be necessary to enable him to fill his exalted position with credit. An especial training would be required in such a case, and it is equally true that an especial training is needed to develop the boy into a good husband. A friend of mine, who was unhappily married, told me that, during the first few years of her wedded life, she occasionally would say to her husband "What did your mother teach you about this or that?"

His invariable answer was,
"Nothing."

And his conduct certainly indorsed his statement. I felt that his wife was justified in laying most of her marital unhappiness at the door of her mother-in-law.

Women often complain that in the matter of masculine sins and shortcomings, too great a burden of responsibility is laid upon their shoulders. They say the world is still Adamic; ready to raise the cry "It was the woman that Thou gavest to be with me." It seems to me the trouble is just here; too great blame has been laid upon wives, and too little upon mothers. Almost every second man is of the opinion that if women did their duties as wives — if they made pleasant, attractive homes; if they were thrifty, economical, and industrious, men would almost cease to drink, and would abandon other forms of vice,

This is a vital mistake, as a little investigation will prove. In hundreds, if not thousands of homes, there are wives of just such a pattern — wives who bear uncomplainingly more, far more than ever a just God intended should be put upon them, and yet their husbands continue to be notably deficient in what constitutes manhood. It would even seem, with a certain kind of creature, as if the very patience and goodness of the wife acted as a powerful irritant which provoked to greater wickedness. The world even to-day, takes little account of all this. If a man spends his evenings abroad, especially if they are spent with reputable friends, he is generally the recipient of a sympathy, strong, even if silent. "He is unhappy at home," is the general conclusion, and that conclusion is almost invariably based upon the supposition that his wife is not all she should be. Few would tender a wife any such sympathy should she go abroad to the neglect of her home. And yet, when we look at the matter honestly, we are forced to confess that, without a good and apparent reason, it is as contrary to the laws of right for a married man to spend his leisure away from his home, as for a married woman to do so, and furthermore, that when he does this, the cause of the unhappiness which leads him to avoid his home, is fully as apt to lie in himself as in his wife. In the same degree is justice wanting, when it is known that a man is oppressed with financial embarrassment. The extravagance of his family is a reason which first springs to the minds

of most people. Yet, when the facts are laid bare it is frequently found, that the man's dissipated habits, or his business blunders, or his passion for speculation, or something else for which he is responsible, is the cause of the trouble, rather than any wrong or foolish doing on the part of the wife. This statement does not preclude a belief in the existence of extravagant women. There are, unfortunately, many such in the world, but their number and their work has, I am confident, been over-estimated.

When dealing with that very subtle question — the effect of a wife's character and life upon her husband — most people lose sight of the fact that the wife usually comes in contact with her husband, after he has reached years of maturity; after his habits are crystalized; after his character is formed.

The work that she can accomplish is, at best, very limited. It may be thought that this statement is derogatory to the power of religion, which, it is claimed, is able to effect a complete transformation in the lives of men and women fully matured. I have neither the wish nor the power to deny this, having personally known of some cases that would serve as able illustrations of the truth of this assertion. But I believe that such transformation is most rare, and only effected with certain peculiar people under certain peculiar circumstances. I do not believe that any very radical change of character in adult persons, is common

No doubt some change in character follows every de-

cided change in life, and this change is more or less marked, according as the person operated upon, is more or less susceptible to outward influences. By this last I do not mean weak, for such an one is but poor material to influence. He may easily be brought up to a certain mark, but no power can hold him there, permanently. Sooner or later, he is sure to slip back to a spot in the neighborhood of the old place. But even in an aspiring character — a character kept flexible by constant looking up and reaching up to a higher platform; a character the most susceptible to good influences — even in such a character, after the years of maturity are reached, habit will be found to hold its own with a strong grip, a grip which can only be shaken off by a mighty effort of will-power. This being the case, of what injustice must we plead guilty when we are arraigned on the charge of having held wives unduly responsible!

The case as regards mothers, however, is quite different. The world in its reforming schemes, is more and more founding its hopes upon the children. Some Christian workers go so far as to openly admit that they have but little expectation of success when dealing with a man of full age, who has grown hard in sin; it is to the children, they claim, that we must look for better days. This conclusion, which seems to me in the main most just, brings the responsibility right home to the mothers. They take the child when it is tender and innocent, and even after making due allowance for

the force of inheritance, we cannot deny that a mighty power lies within the mother's reach — nay, within the compass of her clearest duty. It is to her, then, that we must look for future reformation; through her we can accomplish almost everything of good; without her, we are all but helpless.

I am aware that in arraigning mothers, as it were, I may be calling down much indignation upon my head. Though the arms of history are long, they cannot reach back to a time when motherhood was not held sacred. A man who abuses his wife, excites condemnation, but a man who abuses his mother, excites horror. There is a halo about the mother's head, and the feeling of tenderness and veneration with which she is regarded, must, of necessity, increase with each year of her life. A man's wife, is of his own age; they are, in a manner, on a par; his mother is older, feebler, and her physical needs sometimes appeal as strongly to his tenderness as her relationship, and her moral worth. This is the only substantial reason that suggests itself to my mind for the difference between the world's leniency towards mothers and wives—a difference which we cannot fail to perceive. But a day is coming when mothers can no longer escape facing their accountability, and in that day I am confident there will be less evil to lay at the door of wives, even if we are ready to do them that injustice. I trust I will not be understood to claim that wives are without the power to influence their husbands, or that they never do influence them for the worse.

The wife can and should take up the work where the mother leaves off, for men are always, in some sense, children, and while it is true that women are physically dependent upon us, morally speaking, they are self-reliant, and it is oftener we who lean upon them. But this work of the wife would be rendered far more possible if the mother would first do her duty; or, to speak more correctly, this work of the wife is all but impossible, unless it be preceded by that of the mother. When we see a noble man it is to his mother, rather than to his wife, we should award the greater praise just as we should blame the mother, rather than the wife, when the man is weighed and found wanting. Nor does this view of the case seem to me to imply the slightest disrespect for motherhood, but rather the reverse. Were I a mother, it would be my proudest thought that, in my hands lay so great a power. A man, be he strong and aspiring, longs to occupy a position in life, where his opportunities are great. He knows that such a position must needs be cumbered with heavy responsibilities, but instead of shrinking from them, he rather pays them court, not because of the responsibilities themselves, but because of the proud achievements which may be his, if he meets them successfully. Some writers maintain that women are all catholics at heart, in that they shrink from responsibilities, and doubtless there is a grain of truth in this statement, for women are more sensitive of conscience than men, and in meeting a responsibility would more fully appreciate its solemnity.

Nevertheless, God has seen fit to lay upon women responsibilities, the heaviest in the world, and in training their daughters mothers should lay stress upon this fact; prepare them to meet their obligations, and, furthermore, to feel a noble joy in them.

It being demonstrated then, as I trust, that we are showing mothers no disrespect and doing them no wrong in holding them accountable for the proper formation of the characters of the little men and women entrusted to their care, let us then take up, one by one, those causes of marital unhappiness which have already been mentioned, and which I have numbered less in accordance with their importance, than with a view to convenience of treatment.

1. *The ignorance of women in the conduct of households.*

The head might be made to cover much ground, for its application is in reality broader than a careless glance would lead one to suppose. We will only look at it in its most commonly accepted interpretation, that of ignorance of cooking and such other work as is necessarily involved in housekeeping. In the preceding pages, I have refuted the statement that the ignorance or carelessness of wives in this respect is the main cause of domestic trouble. None the less, however, do I believe it to be a cause of such importance that its abolishment would do much toward a "consummation devoutly to be wished." The fact that mothers have the power to do away with this class of ignorant, shift-

less wives, by the proper training of their daughters, is so obvious, and so generally conceded, that I need not waste words in argument.

I trust that I shall be able to win the indorsement of my readers, when I place a few more of the main causes of unhappy domestic life within the mothers' power of prevention.

Let us now look at the second and third main causes, for although they wear a decided shade of difference, they are so closely allied, that we cannot well treat one without also treating the other.

2. *The lack of sympathy between men and women.*

3. *The lack of proper respect in both men and women for womanly employments.*

In the training of children there is apparent, from the very first, a certain distinction—a difference made between girls and boys—which results in a separation in their sympathies, a separation which is the parent to one still wider, in the lives of men and women. Permanent separation in their interests is impossible, since God has unalterably identified these, but the purposes of Providence may be obscured, and even temporarily baffled by the stupidity of human educators.

As a general thing, the pursuits of the girl are of but little consequence to her brother, and he has still less idea of her aims and aspirations. She, too, on her part, is without a complete understanding of that toward which he would work, although her failure toward him in this respect is less marked than his toward

her, partly because of her greater tenderness and quicker insight, and partly because the objects of his endeavor are generally more tangible than are her own. A lady once said to my wife, with an earnestness which was really pathetic, "Do you suppose we fall as far short of understanding men, as they do of understanding us?" And then she added, in answer to herself, "No, it cannot be that we do, for we are so much more sympathetic than they, and so much more dependent upon their love than they are upon ours, that we are constantly trying to enter into their lives."

Whether this very noticeable difference, in the power of sympathy possessed by men and women, is a thing of nature, or a thing of education, we cannot, at present, determine. It is, however, certain that education does much to foster, if it does not even beget such difference. I look for a better day in this, as in other respects; indeed, we may even now see the signs of the speedy coming of that day. "The first gray streaks of dawn" have already appeared, and now the sky is blooming in the West with the reflected promise of sunrise. The proofs of this, though slight, are many. One which occurs to me as I write, is the increase of attention paid to music by men. A few years ago, in America, it was thought unmanly to be musical. Now, a gentleman is proud of any proficiency in this direction, and many who have no talent as performers, are taking pains to educate themselves theoretically, in an art which has been relegated to women, simply because of its position in the realm of imagination and sentiment.

Not long ago, in conversation with a friend who is, by all who know him, credited with an unusual amount of manly strength, I was speaking of that hardness which contact with the world is apt to engender, and he said he hoped that in the best part of his nature he was not falling under any such growth-preventing influence. He spoke of his increasing delight in the beauties of nature, and of the increasing tenderness of his feelings. "Tears spring to my eyes quite readily now although they were once almost total strangers to tears," he said, and as I listened to his words, I thought how much easier it was now for a man to talk and feel thus, than it would have been some years ago, when a different and falser idea of manhood obtained. A celebrated preacher who lately passed away, often enlarged upon the fact that the attributes growing out of and allied to the imagination, are among the strongest and highest belonging to the human character. It was but the other day, I was reading of a great man "He was as responsive as a young girl, to calls upon his tenderness."

These truths should be forcibly brought to a boy's mind, in many and diverse ways; he should have that perfect man—the Christ Jesus; the God in man—placed before him as a model of a strong, sympathetic, tender character. He should be shown how the truly great, among the world's men, are truly tender and sympathetic, and he should also be shown how lacking in such fine qualities is the low, brutal nature. An instance of this latter was lately brought to my notice, and occa-

sioned me the loss of a client. A man was one day conversing in my office, and chancing to allude to the feminine craving for sympathy, he said:—

“The trouble is, most fellows spoil their wives, in this respect, when they begin; they start out so as to make them exacting. I began right, and I’ll warrant you my wife don’t expect much from me.”

“And I will venture to assert,” I said, “that she does expect much from you. Go home and act the churl, and see if she is astonished; go and behave selfishly towards her, and see if she is surprised; go and indulge in a dozen acts that are scientifically brutal, and see if your conduct is any more than she expected. You will learn that she looks for a great deal from you, and it is my opinion that you seldom fall short of her expectations.”

It is undoubtedly true that a man’s business life is largely responsible for the encrusting of his sympathies, and we must rejoice that the higher destiny of woman, keeps pure and free in her that fount of love and joy. But while thus rejoicing, we must not forget that woman has her needs, nor should we rest content to be always receiving, and seldom giving. I would urge upon mothers, for their boys, a training that would lead them to aspire toward a nature enriched with quick sympathies, as toward a high ideal—a training that would enable them in later years, successfully to combat the hardening influences of the world.

In the cultivation of that sympathy between men

and women which is so essential to a perfect understanding and appreciation of each other, an entire similarity between the training of boys and girls is not necessary, although I am strongly of the opinion that a much greater similarity than at present exists would result greatly to the advantage of both. I would, however, emphasize the necessity of so educating both the girls and the boys of a family, as to induce each to respect the work and personality of the other. I am confident that a feeling of that kind, inculcated in boys toward the occupations of the other sex, and toward the sex itself, would result in a very different attitude of mind from that which men now commonly assume toward womanly employments, and toward women themselves. It would also result, if I mistake not, in an increase of dignity in the female character, and would thus aid in abolishing much of that feminine triviality and instability which earnest women, as well as men, now so greatly deplore. The importance of womanly occupations and employments cannot too often or too forcibly be set before our youth. There is an almost universal difference in this respect, between the education of girls and boys. The latter are, in many ways, given reason to consider their especial pursuits more real and more elevated than those of a girl. Even in families where the bond of love between brothers and sisters is strong, this feeling is apparent, and in less affectionate households the boys regard the occupations and amusements of their sisters with a feeling akin to

contempt, while the girls either wear an air of annoyance toward their brothers, or else look up to them with an adoration which is weak and unjustified.

Women, as a rule, have no proper respect for womanly employments,—certainly no proper conception of their value. I was lately struck by a sentence, on this subject, in an English publication. It was found in an address by the Princess Christiana on the occasion of the unveiling of a statue of the Queen, at the Royal Holloway College. She said: “I certainly sympathize with the desire for learning and mental culture, but I do feel that sometimes ambition, which urges many to encroach on man’s province, causes them to underrate the importance of the many duties and privileges which are given to women alone.” This is a golden truth, and it cannot be framed with too precious stones, nor can it be too persistently placed before the eyes of the young.

Any education which tends to degrade womanly employments—any education which tends to create a chasm between men and women, is to be deplored, and few things work with more certainty toward such an end than permitting boys to look slightly upon the toils and sports of their sisters. More than that, upon their mothers also, for their mothers, albeit they are engaged in the noblest work on earth, a work infinitely above and beyond anything the fathers can hope to perform—even their mothers are not beyond the reach of this boyish scorn, or, to say the very least, are often without the pale of boyish admiration and sympathy.

From their very infancy almost, all boys are taught, in various subtle ways, that they are members of a superior sex. The father who says to his little son, "Don't cry, leave that to girls," or, of a doll, "That is not a boy's toy — boys should have balls, and marbles, and guns—dolls are only fit for girls"—that father is teaching this doctrine, and contributing his mite toward the separation of the sexes.

In like manner boys are taught that housework and the cares of motherhood are beneath their sex, but are so naturally fitted for girls and women that but little of effort and sacrifice, and perhaps less of brains and skill, are necessary for their proper performance. They are taught by the same blundering educators that, while freedom is a necessary condition of masculine happiness and dignity, it is of small importance to women.

Women are often said to err by failing to understand a man's feelings and cares, and it is claimed that this failure of sympathy leads them to resent an irritation with which they would otherwise bear, and to expect and demand little attentions which they would readily excuse, could they but comprehend the necessary absorption of business life. All this has undoubtedly been often true, but if the fault still continues, literature cannot be blamed, for certainly it has, for many years, teemed with sermons upon this text. My observation, however, has led me to decide that men are far more frequently at fault in failing to appreciate the toils and

burdens of their wives, and to make due allowance for the state of nerves which must be the inevitable result of such cares. But be this as it may, whichever side is most at fault, it cannot be denied that an education which would draw brothers and sisters more closely together, by the bonds of respectful sympathy and intelligent appreciation, would later tend toward a better understanding between men and women in married life. Nor will any deny that whoever works toward this end is working for the greatest good of mankind.

To pass now to the fourth cause assigned for marital unhappiness, we have:

4. *The lack of business training in women.*

On a preceding page, in speaking of the failure of mothers to properly educate their children, I made especial mention of sons. It would seem that, in the training of their daughters, mothers are less at fault. But even here I am convinced that great improvement could be made. The idea of fitting a boy to become a good husband and father is unfortunately rarely met with in print or practice, while that of educating a girl to become a good wife and mother is quite old as well as common. One reason for this difference may be found in a widespread opinion that wifehood and motherhood occupy a much more important position in a woman's destiny, than does husbandhood and fatherhood in that of a man's. But we wish here to prove that, although this idea of a woman's natural destiny is old in theory, it is in practice still in a crude condition,

capable of and really in need of many changes and modifications. Take the two positions for which, as we believe, women are peculiarly intended — first, that of the director, governor and counselor of youth. Many girls are brought up with the prospect of this position continually before their eyes, but how many are especially trained for it? and how do they fill it? Even when their children are infants these untrained women often show a lamentable folly and ignorance in caring for them, and when, with increasing years, the children make higher and graver demands, a large number of such mothers utterly fail to respond, as is evinced by the many poor characters that are annually turned out upon the world from households which would, had the mothers been properly trained in their youth, have furnished us with noble men and women. The proper care and training of children is a most difficult matter; men are unfitted for it by nature and by pursuit. It belongs peculiarly to women, but in preparation for such work they need training themselves, mental and moral—a training earnest, and even severe, and this is just what few mothers think it necessary to give to their daughters. We see every now and then instances of women so nobly equipped for this work, and so ably trained—women who bring to it such a breadth of nature, such strength of character and such mental endowments—that we gaze upon them with the most profound respect, and feel that in their hands the work is so elevated that no woman need desire anything loft-

ier, and no man's ambition can possibly compass anything as great.

We have already touched upon the failure of mothers to fit their daughters to become competent housekeepers, and in this connection we would wish to urge upon our readers the necessary relationship which a business training bears to huswifery. No woman can properly conduct the affairs of a household without understanding the laws which govern income and outgo; without comprehending her own financial status; understanding the keeping of accounts, and grasping many details of economy. All this requires a previous careful business training; this last is also necessary to enable her to assume her proper position as financial partner of her husband, a position which, as I hope to prove later, it is almost essential to the achievement of marital happiness that she should suitably fill.

For the fifth cause of marital unhappiness we have assigned :

5. The failure on the part of the husband to respect the wife's ownership of herself.

This is one of the most important of all the causes, and also the most difficult to discuss. I am well aware of the fact that various terms, such as idealist, crank, and even fool, await the advocate of the reform suggested by the above head. But these epithets will be found, upon examination, to be quite harmless, and even the timid need not shrink from their application.

A more serious charge is that of aiming a blow at the very essence of marriage; but this may be refuted by sound arguments, and proofs can be adduced to show that it is not against the preservation of that most holy institution that the blow is aimed, but against its profanation.

One great reason for the difficulty found in treating this subject is its extreme delicacy. Another is the character of the arguments opposed to reform. They being so attuned that one is liable to seem to be inveighing against law and gospel itself, should he attack them. A life of moderation has long been urged, but this idea of a woman's absolute ownership of herself; this idea of the wrong of any compulsion, even though it be a compulsion which bases its strength on the reluctance of one to oppose another,—this idea is all but new, and indeed really belongs to an age so advanced that it is likely to receive but small support at present. This latter fact, however, should not prevent its being urged, for just as surely as the work of Christ was advanced, in some hearts, by John the Baptist's cry, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord," so surely will this cry, "Purify your lives and yourselves," lend a power toward the success of the cleansing influences which are already upon their march toward this people, for their uplifting and ennobling. Men, before and after Milton, have sung and spoken in favor of quite another kind of life, for which they have even claimed great beauty. But although multitudes have believed and

acted upon their words, they are wrong. There is beauty indeed, in the creation of a human being, if the creation be not out of time and place; but there is no beauty in the objectless indulgence of sensual feelings. Still less is there beauty or right in such indulgence, when it be opposed to the wishes and feelings of another. Beauty would lie in abstinence, and in a noble power of self-control. "With all diligence endeavor that thou be thoroughly master of thyself, and that all things be under thee and not thou under them. . . . Thou shouldst be as a freed man, passing over into the lot and freedom of the sons of God." Beauty there is in a consideration for the feelings and wishes of one more delicate — more pure; in a removal of the whole being from mere animalism, and an exaltation of the character, by means of such chastity, to a degree of strength and nobility that would furnish grounds for the grandest of all claims in the realm of inheritance, that of the heirship of God.


Among the army of opposers of any such life of self-control, many women will, I doubt not, occupy a front rank, not because an opposite life possesses for them any grace or beauty, but because the doctrine of rights and needs of man, and the law of marriage has been so long and so forcibly impressed upon them, that consent has become almost a matter of conscience. In the same way has the duty of polygamy been enforced upon the mind and conscience of many Mormon women, until they have come to feel that resistance

would, even in God's sight, be a sin. But this abnormal condition of conscience cannot, in either case, change black into white. There are other women who recognize the wrong of such a life, and have but little respect for one who compels it, but they feel it to be the price of peace and quiet in their homes, and so accept it as a necessity. In like manner, has many a woman felt that a life of shame was for her the price of the commonest comforts and even necessities of life, and so accepted it. Doubtless this comparison will excite horror and indignation — so many leagues above this poor creature is the wife supposed to stand. But in such a condition as I have instanced, there is no real marriage; true, it wears that sacred name, but in reality, is nothing more or less than a legalized form of that which, without the pale of the law, we so justly and strongly condemn, since it grants privileges for a consideration of food, clothes, and various comforts and luxuries. The law protects people, so living, from disgrace; the present abnormal state of social opinion even indorses them, but when we examine the matter, what other verdict than the one above given, can we render? And how can God, who said to us through His Son "Blessed are the pure in heart," and whose type of sanctification is the whiteness of snow — how can He regard such a life?

Opposition through mistaken ideas of right is one of the greatest impediments with which the advocate of any reform, in this direction, has to contend. Man

is very largely a creature of woman's make. I remember the droll manner in which this idea was urged by a friend of mine, an old Greek Professor, "Let the women be indifferent to a man's appearance, and not one among them will ever brush his hair; on the other hand let women dote on neatness, and every man will look as if he had just hopped out of a bandbox."

While such a statement wears an air of absurdity, and is indeed exaggerated, it nevertheless is fundamentally true, and would work a reformation, should women apply it to the subject we have under discussion. I am sometimes moved with indignation when I am forced to realize how vastly inferior to themselves women really consider men, in spite of the fact that we commonly suppose they are looking up to us. This is evinced by their unresisting acceptance of a life so contrary to their best feelings, because they believe that a more elevated existence is not only beyond our wish, but beyond our power. On behalf of my sex, I wish to strongly assert that, even in this day, men of a higher order do already exist; and furthermore, that there are vast numbers of others who possess the seeds of a purer, stronger character — seeds which might be quickened to life by the sunshine of a woman's faith. I know that many physicians will deny this. Let them take heed to their words. They have already done much to dim the beauty of the coming day, and will doubtless add much more to the work they have already performed, as great chimneys do belch forth



such dense columns of black smoke that the glory of the rising sun is, for a time, obscured ; but just as surely as the sun doth rise at last above the smoke, and shine down upon mankind, so surely shall this orb of purity rise above the blackness of misguided, earth-bound opinion, and become the light of the world. This is more than words, for however many may deny the hypothesis of the evolution theory, most men of wisdom are forced to concede the very apparent fact that God is slowly elevating the human race, lifting it higher and higher above mere animalism, and bringing it nearer the realm of intellectuality and spirituality. And while the full attainment of this purpose is no doubt still far removed, each individual has it in his power to do something toward hastening the desirable day.

I will doubtless be confronted with various evils sure in the minds of many, to be resultant from such reform as is here proposed. One, that of an increased laxity of morals on the part of men, we may put aside with a word. No honest, earnest effort toward purification ever did, or ever will, result disastrously to human character ; it will elevate, not degrade. Another objection amounts to this ; the winding up of the world, but it may also be refuted. Let us look about us for a moment, and then candidly confess of what temper we find the minds of women to be on this particular matter. Are we not forced to admit that the love of children and the desire for them, are

among the strongest feelings a woman knows. Even the little girl is animated by the instinct of motherhood as she plays with her dolls, and with the woman these instincts have become strengthened into the most ardent longings. To nurse, to love, to shelter, to rear, to train — all this is so essentially womanly that the absence of it creates surprise, and is but rarely met with. Women, as a rule, are far more fond of children than men, and any absence of children, after marriage, is to them a greater grief. It is generally a man's ambition which is most disappointed when he has no child — he wants someone to inherit his name and position, for which reason he almost invariably has a stronger wish for a son, than for a daughter. A woman, too, has her ambition, but it is not that which receives the severest blow when no little child comes to the fireside. The tenderest longings of her heart are disappointed. She feels herself forever dwarfed, since the noblest, richest side of her nature must evermore lie in the shadow. Are women, then, likely to refuse to give themselves these cares and blessings as soon as the power to say "Yea and Nay" becomes theirs? I believe, on the contrary, that they will be less likely to avoid maternity then, than now, since freedom of will often inclines people toward that, which under compulsion, they might seek to evade. I have no doubt that some women would, without good reason, decline a family, nor do I doubt that freedom from all compulsion would be the occasion of some

wrong in the world, but such wrong could not, by reason of its diminutiveness, be compared with the wrong which compulsion works on every side of us every day of our lives. There are times—there are occasions, when a woman would doubtless, and with great justice, refuse to add to her family. She would probably consider her health and finances far more than her husband does now, and it were well for her to do so. Were women at liberty in this matter, we should probably cease to see families where the children were only prevented from being twins, triplets, or quartlets, by a difference of a few months in age. We might also cease to see very large families, and this would, I think, be a great gain. Our grandmothers had large families, it is true, but albeit they were good women, they had no such ideas of the duties and powers of motherhood as are beginning to weigh upon the women of to-day, and will still more, let us trust, influence the women of the future. Nor did our grandmothers give to a large number of children, the strength and care required to-day, to properly rear a small family. Even our mothers were ignorant of many things which lie within the domain of the woman who has a child to train. Said a lady of fifty years of age—a lady of more than usual intelligence—when I spoke to her of the tremendous power that lies in a mother's hands, “I don't think that was talked or written of in the day when I was bringing up my sons, and I do so regret now that it was not. Those ideas

would have made a difference in my training, and in the results of my work."

As women appreciate the greatness of their task, they will enter upon the work in a nobler spirit, and will, I think, be still happier in it, but they will probably realize more fully the difficulty, and in many cases the impossibility, of properly training a large number of children.

Let it not be doubted that this is God's way. He has, it seems to me, made it clear as noon-day, that he intended the mother should be the one to decide whether or not the little child should enter the family. He has so ordained the manner of a child's coming into this world, that the mother's condition of mind, her happiness in the great event, is of vital importance, not only to herself but to the health and mental structure of the child. Many grown men and women to-day bear, in their character and disposition, the unmistakable and unhappy mark of the wrong endured by their mothers. It may be urged that God intended women should feel it a duty always to be ready to welcome the coming of a child. I think not, for in looking over the world, we have every reason to suppose that any condition of life and opinion toward which the people, slowly, but surely gravitate, year by year, and age by age, is a part of God's purpose, and although some may fail to read the signs of the times in this respect, the thoughtful student cannot fail to perceive that the world is slowly, very slowly, but surely

tending toward marital liberty for women. To those whose sense of justice is well developed, there ought to be no doubt about the right in this matter. In any other direction if one manifestly bears by far the greater burden of an undertaking, it seems to us but common justice to concede to him the greater control over it. Why should it not be so in this most important of all work — this in which the toil is so unevenly divided that the two sides can only bear such comparison as can the mole-hill and the mountain?

Against the burden of support which the father is supposed to assume, we have on the other side a sacrifice of appearances, of personal comfort, of pursuit, and greater still, a mental, physical and nervous strain, which can only be understood when endured — not for days or for weeks merely, but for months, before ever the little cry is heard. And then comes the care, the anxiety, the watchfulness; the sacrifice of time and strength. How quickly do the scales fall on the the woman's side! And even the small amount with which we credited the father, is offset by a similar care on the mother's part. In popular parlance, the support may be said to be furnished without her effort, but that is not strictly true. In most families of small means the coming of another child signifies even greater toil, greater restriction, and self-denial pecuniarily, on the mother's than on the father's part. In many instances the latter is upon a salary and neither this nor his work is increased at the birth of each

child ; whereas, the mother's labors are always increased by every such event, since she is often forced to do extra work on this account, and is always obliged to plan and turn in order to make each dollar do double duty. Some day all these things will be so apparent that argument on the subject will even be an absurdity, but at present they are not only unadmitted, but even little thought of.

Physicians inveigh against a crime which they tell us is becoming alarmingly prevalent, and is directed against young lives. They even call upon legislatures to prevent it, but legislatures are powerless, as has been proven, and powerless they will remain, for they cannot enact laws which will compel all men to be chaste, and will set all women free — this being the only remedy for the evil.

I have had occasion to talk with a number of people on the subject of divorce, and I am satisfied that this lack of marital freedom on the part of women, is the foundation of many a separation. Although most women, in theory, admit the necessity of the marital rights, which, by a book I recently read, are so properly called marital wrongs, yet none the less, their lives are frequently embittered by an underlying sense of injustice, and the selfishness of their companions is very often the occasion of a loss, on their part, of the love and respect which alone can safely pilot a wedded pair across the matrimonial seas.

“But,” some one may cry, “granted that all this is so, what can be done?”

Next to nothing, without the aid of mothers; next to everything, with their aid.

When a boy is budding into manhood, when he first begins to feel a difference in power and desire, then the mother should take her place close to his heart; then more than ever before, or ever after, is her time to unalterably influence his character; then can she teach him those lessons of purity without which he must ever take rank with the lower animals, and by reason of which he may step up into the region of noble manhood. Purity has long been a favorite theme with mothers, but I do not think that all of them have chosen the most impressionable time, or the most forcible manner of teaching it, nor do I think that the majority of mothers are in the habit of teaching their sons the purity which obtains within married life, as well as without. On the contrary, I have every reason to believe they either teach nothing upon the point, or teach its opposite. I once knew a woman of education and even refinement, who went so far as find fault with her daughter-in-law on account of the chaste life which she knew her son was living. She did not seem to fear it would drive him into dissipation, but felt he was defrauded of his rights. If this mother was not startlingly different from the large majority of mothers, what can we expect of men! Can the seeds of purity, chastity, and self-control be sown in the tender soil of young boyhood by women of such kind? No! believe me, we will never see a higher race of men,

until we develop a higher race of mothers! As long as women continue to do violence to their clearest duties to other women — nay, even to God Himself,— who would have all men pure, as well as all women, the whole race must continue to groan and travail with sin and misery.

Although this point pertains chiefly to the training of boys, there is much here that mothers can and should do with their daughters. No girl should be allowed to reach womanhood without having received especial and distinct instruction upon the subject of her rights. I saw this idea suggested in print a few years ago, and it will bear frequent repetition. It has been said with much truth, that those who surround one are strongly influenced in forming an opinion of his character, by his own estimate. Like all rules this one works with many exceptions, but proofs of its truth are quite common. Let a self-depreciating man harp upon his lack of intellectuality, and most of his friends will believe him. Our pretensions, in the line of character, will ever sustain a certain relationship to the opinions entertained by others concerning us. In like manner, do our claims in the line of rights, bear a certain relationship to our awards. The ignorance of women on this subject, seems to me, one of the greatest impediments now existing, to their enjoyment of justice.

It cannot be supposed that in the teaching which we are now earnestly pressing upon mothers, as a duty they owe their daughters, perfect harmony of ideas will

prevail. There has been, and possibly always will be, a wide spread difference of opinion upon the subject of a woman's rights; nevertheless, there are some fundamental principles, upon which no one who has studied the times, can doubt that the world is strongly coming to an agreement, and in my judgment, the day of such agreement will be materially hastened by a study of the various points that bear strongly upon the welfare of the race, and still more, by an attempt upon the part of mothers to give their daughters some intelligent, definite idea upon such themes.

What I am advocating in this essay, is no impossibility. It is not uncommon now to hear and read the assertion that no woman should have a child unless it is her wish. Fifty years ago, such an idea would almost have blasted the thinker, in the opinion of the world. Fifty years hence, this idea will, I make no doubt, be enforced, and another idea still more advanced — still nearer the domain of justice and purity will have entered the hearts and lives of many thousands. I have as little faith in the reformation and purification of the large majority of men, of the present day, as those particular individuals (or their wives) entertain of themselves. If they were my soldiers, if the success of the battle I am waging depended upon them, I should throw down my weapons in despair. But I am looking in another direction; toward the women. There already are many authors in the world who are intelligently noble. It is to them I particularly address these words,

to urge them to make of their sons, men of a purer day and generation. It is thus that the work will be accomplished, and as the circle of mothers whose purity is equalled by their strength and knowledge, continually widens, so will the number of men, worthy of the name, continually increase. Those women who make no effort toward the reform, who paralyze themselves and others with the cry "Impossible," will some day realize that, in their way, they have done as much to retard the coming of the dawn as have those women fortunately so few in number) who do not wish for its coming.

Glancing backward now, to the opening of this treatise we find,

6. *Dissipated habits.*

There is little need for any long discourse under this head, because the evil is so generally conceded. I only wish to call attention to two points, in this connection. One, the close relationship which this cause bears to the preceding — in that the remedy is the same — a cultivation by the mothers in the boy, of perfect purity of habit and mind. A boy so trained, has, in his armor, no vulnerable spot in which the arrows of uncleanness may lodge. He does not grow into a man who is beset with temptations upon every street corner, for the "pleasures" that are offered do not appeal to such a one. His tastes and pursuits are of a higher order. An honest woman suffers no temptation when the clerk leaves her alone with the most beautiful articles of wear. Her principles and tastes are such that she does not even

experience a sensation of resistance in such a case. She may be too poor to legally indulge herself in such articles; she may be keenly susceptible to their beauty, but if she be perfectly honest, the display and the opportunity offer to her no temptation. The woman of doubtful character, however, meets all this with quite different feelings. She has no strong, abiding principles of honesty to make theft impossible with her, and if she do not yield this time it is because of a distinctly recognizable effort of resistance. So, an improperly trained man summons what strength he possesses to ward off a temptation that could not exist for a pure character. I am a hearty believer in the power of, and the need for, religion, and I think we do not often enough have it brought to our thought that the religion of Christ, properly taught and enforced, does something more than give strength to resist the grosser forms of evil, in that it abolishes their power to tempt. Temptations enough to continually strengthen character will exist for every man and woman, however trained,— we need not fear any lack of need for contest in this world, but I confidently assert that with very few exceptions, the grosser, more revolting forms of evil, will, with those men and women who have been rightly trained, lose all power to do aught but disgust.

One more point under this head. In the training of their children, mothers too often fail to satisfy themselves that they have given those children something better than good impulses — namely, strong principles. We are

continually meeting with men who are as moral as could be desired for a day, a week, or a year, merely because their impulses are acted upon favorably. To the careless observer such men rank high, but a keener insight betrays the fact that in good, as in bad, they are governed by impulses, and that they are sadly lacking in those firm, unshaken principles which alone can make a man steadfast and reliable, under all circumstances. Surely Christ had such weak creatures in mind, when he told of the house built upon the sand.

To pass to the next head, we have,

7. *The undue idealism with which young people enter married life.*

It was only a few months ago that an idea came to me, in the guise of something like a burlesque. It was the thought of a sort of training school in which young people were to study marriage. I confess that at first, I smiled over this, as at something quite droll, but now that the idea has dwelt in my mind for a time, I see it quite differently. Not that I would advocate the practicability of any such schools. I merely mean to say that, upon weighing the matter seriously, it has seemed possible to prepare young people in some way, and to some degree, for marriage. Something of this sort is often done, of course, but still more is possible. In these days of easy divorce, incompatibility, is, in a few states, sufficient cause, and such cause is, in my judgment, materially increased, if not often created, by the ignorance of young

people in marrying. It is well enough, no doubt, to allow the state of matrimony to wear some roses, but it should occasionally be regarded through the medium of a clear, common sense atmosphere. For instance, a boy should never be allowed to grow up and enter upon a courtship in the belief that it cost no more for two to live than one. Nor, although I by no means favor a marriage for money, do I think it wise to let a girl entertain the idea that she can marry a young man whose salary or income is five hundred a year, and have a well furnished house, and be able to live a comfortable, happy life. No doubt many will think I am discouraging sensible marriages, but I am not. I do not even state my own taste in this matter, I merely say that if young people contemplate marrying on a very limited income, they should be made to understand, that such a marriage means very hard work—more than that, even drudgery. I have in mind, at this writing, the picture of a young couple who intended to build immediately upon marriage, not a plain, bare, one-story shanty, but a comfortable, tasteful, six or seven room house, containing, among other apartments, a large and beautiful library, lined with low bookcases, and bric-a-brac—a library in which they would spend their evenings together, reading aloud, and talking over their favorite authors, and thoughts—for they both had literary tastes. But a year or so after their wedding, they were found in a small, and rather bleakly furnished, rented house, containing a few books which they were too weary to read in the

evening, for they both worked very hard—the husband at his business, and the wife, caring for her house and baby. She tried to cling to the old plans, as a woman will, and made pathetic attempts to pass a pleasant evening with her husband after the baby was in bed ; but, as she told a friend, “Ned does not seem to care for the things which he once so dearly loved.”

Before marriage, their letters and talk were full of books, and fascinating speculations and theories ; now, if the wife tried to talk to her husband, he gave little heed, and sometimes even asked her to be silent, as he had to attend to some writing connected with his business. His evening ended early, for he invariably went to sleep in his large chair, and had to be roused to prevent his passing the night there. I confess I felt sorry for the poor young fellow ; he had found that the cost of marrying, the cost of fitting out, and keeping a house, even in a small way, was much larger than he had supposed. His salary, which he had fondly hoped would furnish quite a margin to add to his little capital, and serve to build a home, was really insufficient for their monthly needs, and in addition to the demands made by his mechanical work, his nerve strength was now taxed by the anxieties which naturally filled his mind. So chained, his imagination could not soar very high, and he found himself settling down into a humdrum, bread-and-butter existence, and felt a trifle resentful toward the marriage which had wrought, in his life and being, so undesirable a change. The wife, too, was to be

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pitied, for she suffered much, not only from the failure to realize her dreams, but also from the supposition, which all women will entertain under such circumstances, that her husband's love for her had faded, since it was so seldom evinced in any of the old ways. Nor, when I examine this fear on her part, do I find it to be as unreasonable, as my manner of stating it would lead one to suppose, for it cannot be denied that condition has a powerful effect upon affection, especially if the affection be of recent date and untried. The old adage about poverty and love cannot be universally applied, but it is not without its meaning.

Some may object that I have drawn an extreme case, in that both husband and wife were very unpractical. That is true, but I think that we see some of this same impracticability in every young married pair; and that it always results more or less unfortunately. Certainly a study of some of the necessary conditions of married life, might, with wisdom, be urged upon young people, since it would probably enable them to enter that estate better equipped to ward off the shafts of disappointment. It is my belief that an absence of all such study is often the occasion of those little misunderstandings, those feelings of coldness and estrangement, which, rising in the clear sky of the young couple, take form and shape as "the cloud no bigger than a man's hand," and prophesy a storm by no means as welcome as that a similar cloud foretold in the olden times.

Our next theme is one of even greater importance :

8. *The interference of outsiders.*

If the world is divided upon many themes, it is unanimous upon this one. And yet, although every woman readily assents to the oft-made assertion, that outsiders should remain out, when it refers to her own mother-in-law, yet she as readily forgets to follow such sound advice, when she herself occupies that position toward another. In naming the mother-in-law, with what she may deem undue prominence, I trust I shall not be accused of injustice. If I am, I can only make good my defense, by citing the instances with which literature teems in support of my statement, that it is almost invariably women who stir up this sort of domestic trouble, rather than men ; and of women, that it is more frequently the mother-in-law than the sisters-in-law, although these, too, generally bear a conspicuously warlike part, as they are naturally apt to side with their mother.

It needs no elaborate argument to explain this fact ; the less people see of each other the less apt they are to quarrel, and as the men of the different families are less often thrown together than the women, they naturally preserve their relationship in greater peace, but I doubt not that this would cease to be the case should they all attempt to do business together.

It has been a matter of surprise to me to note how often women, who have even shown an unusual amount of discretion and common sense in the care of their

own families, seem to part with both the instant they receive the title of mother-in-law. They appear to lose sight of the important fact that the relation they bear to the son-in-law or daughter-in-law is of *artificial* construction, and will not bear any such handling as will the natural tie. A mother may, and should talk plainly with her daughter and son, even though the burden of such talk be reproof, but with the husband or wife of that daughter and son, she will, if she be a sensible woman, take no such liberty. Instead of observing such caution, many mothers-in-law go in quite an opposite direction, that of showing a weak and foolish fondness for their children, and of wearing a critical and even fault-finding air toward the partners of those children. Such conduct is worse than foolish, and can only result unhappily. If the object of the mother's intemperate fondness be what he should, he will resent this attitude on his mother's part — resent it very strongly if it be accompanied with any fault-finding of his wife. No reverence for motherhood ought to blind a husband or wife as to the proper course to take at such a juncture. He or she should tell the mother, in the firmest manner, that no interference can be allowed; that while she will always receive due respect from her child, she cannot be permitted to speak a word against the partner of that child. It ought not to matter if a foolish, indiscreet mother should raise her hands in horror at the supposed hardness and rebellion of such a son or daughter; or if, worse still, she should melt into tears,

and protest against the ingratitude of a child for whom she had sacrificed herself as only mothers can. All this, although most harrowing, ought not to blind one to his duty at such a moment, which is to stand by his wife, if he be a man, or by her husband, if she be a woman. Nothing but great unhappiness to all parties can result from any other course, and this fact has been so often and so sadly demonstrated in the world's history, that I marvel a word is necessary upon the subject — marvel that any mother-in-law should ever bring to a household the occasion to make such a decision. Carlyle estimated the population of England as so many million, mostly fools, and if we gave the census respecting mothers-in-law, we should at least be forced to add, mostly very silly. I do not think we should accuse them of anything worse than this kind of weak folly, if we regard their motives, but if looked at the result of their work, we would certainly arraign them on a charge of deliberate wickedness. The dockets of various courts to-day, contain records of many divorces for which divers reasons were given, but where we might read, were we gifted with spirit eyes, one word written in startling colors — mother-in-law !

It has occurred to me that doubtless some will take exception to the head under which I am writing, for it often occurs that the original family of the husband or wife do not consider themselves outsiders. And therein lies their great error. Outsiders they are, and

nothing else, and if they are wise they will heed the words spoken by a lovely old lady, as discreet as she was beautiful, who was asked for advice by another lady, who had just detailed to her some trouble that had arisen in her son's family. "Keep out," said the older woman; "avoid knowing anything about it, if possible, but whatever you know, and whatever else you do, take no part in this." "Keep out," is a text upon which ministers would do well to preach, and every woman who lives to be a mother-in-law should work those words upon a sampler, and framing them, should hang them in such a position that she would begin and end each day with her eye upon them. I have at this time several lady friends to whom I should enjoy presenting such a motto.

Outsiders, and nothing else, as far as any authority is concerned, and yet I have known women who would walk into the house of a son or daughter, and presume to dictate about the government and care of the children, or the management of the house. Even if they are asked for advice, they should use great discretion in giving it, lest it might chance to be of a kind opposed to the wishes of the wedded partner of the one who requests it, and they thus be doing somewhat to create a division in the family. It has always seemed to me that there was a deal of cowardice involved in the part usually taken by the mother-in-law. She must know that, owing to her position there can be no such thing as an equal, fair combat. An

unrelated outsider could with much greater right, step in between husband and wife, because there would be nothing to prevent his being met with hearty blows of resistance, but the mother-in-law intrenches herself, as it were, behind the sacredness of her relationship to one of the wedded pair, knowing well, that because of this relationship, the wrongs she inflicts by speech, manner or influence, cannot be resented as they deserve to be. It would seem as if this fact alone, ought in itself to be sufficient to deter any woman in whose conscience justice and bravery obtain the least recognition, from any interference with the family of a married son or daughter.

Many a man has had his entire married life embittered by the folly of his wife's mother; many a woman has been all but driven to divorce by means of the impertinent and senseless interference of her mother-in-law. Impertinence may seem too strong a term to some, but to me it seems too weak to express the kind of wrong a woman commits when she enters the family of a son, and attempts to exert the slightest control over the children or any other member of the household. Those matters lie within the province of the wife, and when the mother-in-law steps in and interferes, she is nothing more or less than a usurper, and should be treated as such, by at least one of the parties against whom she is sinning. I say one, for although in such a case, the daughter-in-law is the one chiefly wronged, yet the son is also a sufferer at the

hands of his mother, who has lost sight of the fact that the truest way to express her love for him — the only wise way to work for his happiness, is to preserve the unity of his household, a result which is best achieved by an entire absence of the element known as mother-in-law.

I instance the case of a mother with her son, because I believe that it is in this way the greatest trouble comes, for a similar reason to that given to explain why these domestic broils burn most fiercely between the women of the two families. Even if she be living in the same house, the husband is not thrown with his mother-in-law, as much as the wife with hers, and naturally a wife will less readily endure interference from her mother-in-law, than from her mother.

I once knew of a case where a woman insisted upon visiting in the home of a son, albeit she had made her presence most distasteful to her daughter-in-law. She asserted her right to remain, claiming that she was in her son's house, and was not necessarily the guest of her daughter-in-law. This woman considered herself a perfect lady, and yet she would have deemed that she forfeited her right to such title by accepting an invitation to any other house, from its male head, if the mistress of that house did not sanction her coming. She would not, however, have committed any such social violence, by accepting a lady's invitation to her house, even though the husband of that lady were known to be a grumpy fellow, opposed to all company. Why?

Because, although the home and the children belong to the husband, in a much more peculiar sense do they belong to the wife.

I know a woman of most lovely character who is honored, not only by her sons and daughters, but by her sons-in-law and her daughters-in-law—yea, even they arise and call her blessed. Her motto, on visiting in their various households, has been to see without seeing, and hear without hearing.

It is a grievous pity that the title of mother-in-law should have been brought into such opprobrium; so strong is the feeling against that relationship, that many people on marrying, experience a certain shrinking, or a certain hostility (according to the individual nature) toward the mother of their partner, and I have known some who had wedded orphans, to secretly rejoice over the absence of that dreadful connection, the mother-in-law.

How great an opportunity such a relationship presents for the display of fine characteristics, one can readily see, and here I would whisper a word of encouragement to those who occupy that most trying of positions. No matter with what prejudice your daughter-in-law begins her married life, if you are wise and discreet, be sure she will learn to respect you; if you show strong common sense and sound judgment, be sure she will honor you; if you are tender, affectionate, sympathetic, unselfish, in that you are able to look past your son, and observe the needs and trials of his wife, be

sure you will win her tender love and her loyal devotion. Remember this, good sons do not always make good husbands. The two relationships, that of mother and son, and that of husband and wife, are quite different; the demands are different, and the trials are different. While it is likely that a man who bears himself nobly in one relationship, will perform his part well in the other, it is by no means certain that he will do so; so even if your son has been filial, do not conclude that any married troubles he may experience, are necessarily the fault of his wife, for he may, after all, be but a poor husband.

One word to young couples, and that a twice told tale: Go by yourselves, if possible, and if not, insist upon maintaining your supremacy in your own household. It is a great mistake to give way in the beginning, even slightly, for the sake of peace; for the concession thus made, proves to be the "lean devil who is admitted through the key-hole," and who then unlocks the door for a fatter member of the same family. In such a case, a temporary peace may be obtained, but it generally proves to be the calm before the storm.

My last two heads, like numbers two and three, are best considered in conjunction.

9. *Finances.*

10. *The balance of power now resting in the hands of the husband.*

The financial question, as it relates to husband and wife—a question less difficult of discussion than that

which we considered under head number five, is in my judgment entitled to a front rank in the array of main causes of marital troubles. It is, also without doubt, one of the most difficult of remedy of all questions considered in this treatise. Remedy, however, I believe to be possible, although I confess that, at present, I am unable to offer one. I have in my mind several expedients, but none of them are sufficiently satisfactory to justify me in urging them upon public attention. The subject itself, however, I feel more than justified for presenting, and if anyone better versed in statesman-craft than myself should be sufficiently impressed by the demands of the subject to think out a remedy for the evil, I should greatly rejoice. The question may be raised as to why I am not content to leave this, as I have left some other divisions of my subject, in the hands of the mothers, trusting to an improved education of children for a removal of the financial, as of other disadvantages. I am ready to profess my strong faith in the power of such remedy here as elsewhere, but I am well aware of the length of time required for such method. Doubtless many mothers are already training their sons properly upon this subject, as well as others; the number of such mothers will, I am confident, increase with the increasing advantages offered to women, but a number of generations must elapse before we can hope for such a widespread change in the character of mothers that an evil of this kind would be practically wiped out. If we could do noth-

ing better, we might urge this matter as forcibly as possible upon the attention of the mothers of our land, and leave the result of our words to God and the future. We have been compelled to do this in every other instance, because the troubles we have considered are of such intangible quality that they are altogether without the pale of law makers. But the same cannot be said of this question, since it deals with that which, as far as men are concerned, is in all its aspects, controlled by law. Specific remedy I have none to offer at present. But it requires no remarkable degree of astuteness to see that this matter stands quite within the province of legislators. That being the case, it only remains for us to recognize the evil, and a remedy will doubtless, in due time, be discovered. It is my earnest belief that such remedy will not only abolish the evil immediately indicated by the topic Finances, but that it will also aim a substantial blow at some of those more intangible wrongs which we have considered under other numbers.

Possibly one of the strongest arguments in favor of the Presbyterian doctrine of depravity, is the universally conceded tendency of mankind to develop brutality, on gaining comparatively unlimited power over any form of life. Slavery has in many ages and countries tested the possibility of man's being vested with all but absolute power over man, without falling into the sin of abuse of such power. And slavery has been a conspicuous failure. It would seem as if the

advance of civilization was without avail to check the tendency in mankind to degenerate upon the investment of too great power over the liberty and action of any human creature. The Southerners in our own country, almost universally rejoice in the abolition of slavery, The proclamation of freedom was enforced at a financial loss that would never voluntarily have been endured, a loss which caused the entire South to stagger like a drunken man for years, but once made and borne, the gain will be tremendous. Of that, we already begin to see abundant proof. The inevitable result of slavery upon the white population was idleness, cruelty, licentiousness — in short, degeneracy in almost all the finer, stronger traits of human character. This is what the Southerners begin to acknowledge, and in spite of their conservatism, they also begin to see that with the abolition of slavery, the gates of a greater future than ever the South dreamed of before that time, “’gan creak, part, and slowly open.”

In the domestic life, the ownership of the purse is a power which establishes a slavery as contrary to all laws of right and justice, and as opposed, in many of its workings, to progress and elevation of human character, as that dark blot which the immortal proclamation forever erased from the fair face of our beloved country.

Let me try, in a few words, to prove this assertion, and in so doing, permit me to look the matter squarely in the face, not as it might be, in an ideal condition,

not as it is, in some happy instances, but as it is in many cases, and furthermore as it may be, whenever the one now in power chooses to develop its possibilities.

At present the husbands own the family property with but one restriction of any importance, that of the necessity for the wife's signature, in some cases of sale. The income or salary, at office or store, is under his control without legal restriction. With this power in his hands, let us, for a moment, glance at his possibilities of action. Some of these are of so petty a nature that they seem to fall far beneath the level of dignified consideration, but as their result is of great importance, they may be deemed at least worthy of mention.

1. The husband may dictate and control his wife's personal expenditure.

2. He may veto any plans made by his wife, for the education or benefit of their children, if such plans require the expenditure of any money.

3. He may dictate to his wife, not only the city, but the house of their residence.

He may at any time cut off from his wife, as from his children, all moneys, over and above those required for her most urgent necessities of living

To counterbalance this power on the part of her husband, the wife may :

1. Refuse, under some conditions, to give her signature to the sale of property.

2. She may resort to various means of annoyance.

3. She may, in some states, in cases of too aggravated discomfort and misery, put upon herself by her husband, seek and obtain divorce.

That is the short list of her possibilities by way of defense.

To make matters a trifle more explicit, let us go over this list once more, amplifying somewhat, to see in what way a husband may, if ill disposed, use his powers, and also in what way a wife may combat such use.

1. A husband may not only limit his wife's personal expenditures, but he may also, if he choose, humiliate her by requiring an account of every dollar she spends. He may not only refuse to allow her to give anything to charity, but may even refuse her a pew in church, and so, by constantly discouraging her spiritual growth, he may in a manner, control her soul as well as her body.

2. He may at any time or age withdraw his children from school and put them to work, in defiance of the wishes of their mother.

3. He may choose any city for his residence, no matter how opposed to the wishes or good of his wife, such choice may be. He may furthermore choose a most unfavorable house with a view to tormenting her, and compel her to occupy the same. He may refuse to keep any servants for his wife, no matter how great

her need of help may be, or how great his financial ability.

4. He may, at any moment, cut off all money from her, and withhold it until she submits to his demands, keeping himself at the time, beyond the reach of the law, by having monthly accounts with the grocer and butcher and paying their bills himself.

To combat all this, the wife, may :

1. Refuse to sign a property deed, *if* there be property in the family, and *if* such property be for sale, and if this right is not, by reason of her husband's debts, or the nature of the property, modified by law. She may also, in some states, under some limitations, refuse to sign a mortgage.

2. She may resolve herself into a shrew, may use her tongue with great force, may refuse to cook or serve her husband's meals, and in a hundred small ways make his life miserable at home.

3. She may (but only in some states) lay all her most private affairs before the public, render herself liable for the future maintenance of herself and family, and obtain a divorce.

Many people will be shocked by such a showing as I have made. They would be more so, were I to repeat tales that have been told me in confidence.

To happy wives it is almost incredible that a man could make such a brute of himself ; to men of any nobility, it is revolting to think that one of their sex could stoop to such a cowardly, low form of tyranny.


But the fact remains. It is my belief that among the working classes a better state of affairs exists, than in those whose rank in the social scale is higher. Possibly the cause for this is to be found in the greater independence of the wife, owing to the fact that she has before her marriage, and occasionally after that, engaged in some toil that has a money value, and which she could resume if need were. If this cause exists — that is, if the independence of the wife results in better conduct on the part of the husband, it furnishes a left-handed proof in favor of the argument that the placing of too great power in the hands of the husband, results ill. But however that may be, whatever the active cause, I am convinced from what I have seen, that as a rule, the wives of laborers do fare better, in this financial sense, than the more dependent wives of educated men.

It is in vain for any one to claim that such instances as I have cited, though they may be possible, are not probable, or that the large majority of husbands, assume their cares cheerfully, and take a proper care of their families, and in a proper manner. Even if such a statement could be substantiated, it would no more affect the argument, than did the claim of the Southerners some years ago, that the majority of masters were kind, and provided better for the slave, than he could, if free, provide for himself. The argument in both instances is, that the particular condition of affairs or system attacked, grants on the one side, a

power which is unlawful, and on the other, compels a bondage which is contrary to all just ideas of liberty, and to the spirit of our constitution. In discussion of this subject, I have heard men maintain, with a certain mocking earnestness, that there is no danger of a woman's being long deprived of her rights in this money matter, she being equipped, by nature, with a two-edged sword, a weapon too formidable for any man long to combat. In like manner, it seems to me, men might argue that certain young Western towns were in no need of the legal enforcement of laws, since their inhabitants were of such spirit as to be quite capable of being a law unto themselves. Few men of reason would make any such claim, it being generally conceded that mob law is not only opposed to the tenor of our constitution, but also in every way adverse to any permanent maintenance of order, and highly injurious to the character of all engaged in the use of such weapons. And yet, in spite of this, for many years, woman has been left by her country, to the use of a sort of domestic mob law as her weapon, and her only weapon with which to maintain some of her simplest and most necessary rights. It must be confessed that the present pecuniary conditions of domestic affairs is calculated to operate unfavorably upon the character of both husband and wife. The former is constantly under strong temptation to exert a power which he holds in his hands to obtain the fulfillment of such wishes as, in his excitement, he may

imagine just, and which possibly are just. He has also at his constant command a most potent means of retaliation, should he deem himself in any way injured, a most potent means of inflicting humiliation and misery, should he wish to play the tyrant. Certainly any one can readily see that a man must possess considerable native nobility should he abstain from all use of such power, even in time of provocation. And also that the very possession of such power must go far to develop a certain tendency to petty tyranny, which is noticable even in men who have many good parts.

On the other hand, the wife is placed under the strongest temptation to use various petty weapons such as a sharp, scolding tongue and innumerable acts of annoyance to secure for herself a right which should be hers without contest. It must, indeed, be a woman of elevated character who can resolutely turn from all such thought of revenge, and from all such methods of attainment, and continue to act, as far as possible, a wifely, kindly part toward the man who is thus humiliating and harassing her. The ordinary woman would yield to the temptation presented, and forsaking the high ideal of womanly sweetness and nobility, would descend to the level of the shrew, and arm herself with the fishwife's weapons. It is almost impossible to conceive a man as really facing such a situation and acting nobly in it, realizing that he had no honorable redress for wrongs so petty and numerous that



his whole life was made miserable by them. To feel himself tied hand and foot, unless he used contemptible weapons in defense. The situation with any character, must be most lamentable, and it seems to me that it must be highly unfavorable to all development of feminine virtues.

Some will maintain that I am overdrawing the picture. I myself, would think so, had I not, by chance and by intention, in conversation and in consultation, had so many such facts given me. I have often been shocked to learn how men who are well thought of in business life, are capable of subjecting their wives to a series of the most despicable annoyances, by reason of this financial power.

"What can a woman do about it?" said a wife to me, once, after detailing how her husband took offense at some trifle, and albeit she was upon the eve of a trip for her health, a trip he had before endorsed, he kept her, as a punishment, in waiting for several weeks before he allowed her to go, she not knowing the while, what her plans were to be, and whether she was to prepare her house for occupancy that summer, or pack everything away. What can a woman do in such a case? She cannot take a step without money, and if she have no fortune of her own, and her husband has the power to withdraw all funds at any moment, she is completely at his mercy.

"What is a woman to do," I was asked by another wife, who told me how her husband, upon her refusal

to be reconciled with a woman who had wronged her, withdrew all money for some weeks. The grocer and butcher bills he paid by check. The fuel he bought himself, the servants he paid himself, so his household had every appearance of being well supplied, and yet, at that very time, his wife was without a penny in her purse. She had no car-fare, no money even for postage, none for any incidental expenses. What could she do? In her extremity she applied to her husband's partner, only to be told that he would lend her funds, but that he had no right to hand her one dollar of her husband's money, since she had no legal claim to it. What did she do? She borrowed of a friend until she could, without stirring up gossip, contrive to find purchasers for some baking she had begun to do.

Many will indignantly maintain that the Divorce Court is the only place for the redress of wrongs of that kind; but the Divorce Court is not open to such complaints, in all states, and even where it is, most women shrink from entering it. Divorce is lightly — far too lightly regarded in this day, but for all that, there are women who will endure almost anything rather than seek that last redress. It is a poor redress at best. It necessarily cheapens to a certain extent, the names of all parties involved, and worse still, it stains the name of little ones innocent of wrong. Moreover, it is only a small minority of men who have an income that the law can attach in such a case. Most wives, obtaining divorce have to leave their wedded

estate without a dollar, and many of them are cumbered with a family which falls to their support. Divorce is but a poor solution for domestic trouble. Even if we could allow that it were the "pound of cure" it would still be our duty to seek the more valuable "ounce of prevention."

In such cases as I have cited, the men are not entirely vicious by any means; though not of a very elevated type, they are at times, possibly most of the time, passably good husbands. It would certainly be a pity then, to break up the family, create a public scandal, and blacken the names of the children, because of a species of annoyance which the strong arm of the law ought to render impossible.

I confess that the question "What can a woman do about it" has haunted me, and I further confess that it still lies in my mind without satisfactory answer. I shall never forget the joy of one woman of my acquaintance over her own individual solution of the question. She was a woman of too fine caliber, too noble character, to resort to any small means of defense, but she was a proud woman, and she fairly quivered under the indignities to which she was subjected. I am satisfied that they would eventually have affected her mind had she found no relief. After consulting me a number of times, she had all but decided to take steps to obtain a divorce. But she determined to make one more effort to prevent this necessity, and for some weeks, as she told me, she neglected not only her house, but even her

children, bending her every power to the making of money. Her effort to engage in some business which would bring her a small income, and not require all of her time, proved successful, and she came to me with a glowing face. "I can live with him now," she exclaimed, "I need not get a divorce!" and she did live with him, and when he found that his power to make his wife suffer every time he had an ugly spell of temper, was at an end, he turned a leaf, and became a fairly respectable sort of husband, and his wife told me that when she obtained pecuniary independence, she was able to show him far greater forbearance and even tenderness than she could when she felt that he might construe any such act on her part into an effort to get money out of him. I may be reminded of the silk purse adage, and told that we cannot make a good husband out of poor material. One might as sensibly say that it was useless to issue the proclamation of freedom because that would not resolve brutal masters into noble characters. No one claimed that it would. Neither does anyone claim that the grant to women, of some protective financial laws would make of the petty tyrants, upon whose actions we have been dwelling, tender, devoted, noble-minded husbands. But everyone can readily see that these small tyrants would be bereft of their strongest domestic weapon, and would therefore be powerless to work as great injury as formerly. I am even ready to go a step beyond this, and assert that many men who are now disgracing their

sex by using this money power as a tool of domestic tyranny, would, if deprived of such weapon be, in a manner, removed from temptation to play such a contemptible part in their household, and although powerless to become men in the best sense, would improve greatly in actual character, as well as in conduct.

In urging the need of a financial reform in domestic life, I am not blind to the difficulties of such reform. If husband and wife were the only partners in the firm, the question would be easy of settlement on the principle of an equal division. Such a division would, no doubt, more nearly answer the claims of justice than any other, unless indeed, we look with metaphysical eyes at the comparative value of the work of the two domestic partners, in which case the larger proportion of the income would necessarily be awarded to the wife as her lawful share. But unhappily for the immediate adjustment of this matter, there are others besides these two to consider. In earning the family bread, the husband must form business relationships other than that into which he enters by marriage, and these must be considered in agitating the question of new laws. Two men would scarcely dare to form a partnership, if the wife of either partner were liable at any time to step in and take her half from out the business. In view of such an event, the marriage which is to-day, in a certain sense, regarded as business security, would be converted into business disability, and therein, to my mind, lies the one great difficulty, the only great diffi-

culty to the framing of laws, which properly recognize the commercial value of a wife's position in the family. It matters not that many women treat this difficulty lightly, regarding it as set aside by their assertion, that few, if any wives, would use their money privileges so greatly to the family disadvantage. I can only class this argument with that which proceeds from as many men, to the effect that comparatively few husbands are liable to abuse their present money power. Such difficulties are real, and must be met. Commercial success is necessary to the preservation of the family life, and through the family, to the life of the commonwealth of which that family forms an important unit. As far as possible it must be guarded from danger, and certainly no statesman would frame laws which immediately threatened its destruction.

The only escape from this dilemma that occurs to me at present, is assignment to the wife of a lesser share than her legitimate half, and even such a provision would, I think, have to be somewhat hedged about to prevent catastrophe. That something will have to be done, and that before long, I am confident. It is impossible to deny that a growing spirit of independence is already manifest in the gentler sex, nor can one fail to see that such a spirit will grow apace, as the changed condition of woman's life gives it more and more of air and sunshine upon which to feed. I sometimes fear that in lieu of any steps taken by us in the financial direction, the women themselves will attempt the reform

—fear, because I see but one way by which they could hope to achieve it, and that by entering business life. Many women have already done this, and many more are doubtless ready to follow in their footsteps. Whenever a woman engages in outside business in answer to a necessity, I honor her, and am ready to do what I can to contribute to her success. But none the less I can not avoid deploring the necessity itself, and feeling that if such necessity becomes widespread, the most important and beautiful field in all life's garden will run to waste—nay worse than waste, for instead of blossoming with flowers and golden grain, as it would were the plow guided by the proper hand, it will abound in noxious weeds, fitted only to poison the air.

There are, it is true, some employments which a woman can carry on without detriment to the interests of her home—employments which can be taken up or laid down, according to the extent of her leisure, and the demands of her household, but these are so few in number, and the women who are fitted for them are so few, that they can scarcely enter our consideration of the business question, as it affects women at large.

Something must be done, and that shortly, or we shall gradually miss the gentle, womanly faces from our hearthstones and encounter them “upon the mart;” see them “on change,” and meet them in all the devious paths of business life.

Let no man turn a deaf ear to the cry for financial reform in the family circle. It is not only one to which

the voice of justice is attuned, but it is also one which suggests such possible danger, in case of refusal, and such possible good, in case of award, that no man can afford to close his ears. There must be an outlet from the difficulty. A woman living in the retirement of a home has smaller need for expenditure than has a man in business life. It might be that a modest percentage of the husband's income or salary, would satisfy her personal needs. But in addition to this, she should, I think, be given a legal control over the children's education and general care. She should have her voice in her place of residence; her voice in the manner and amount of family expenditure; in the business in which her husband engages; and if the per cent she is legally empowered to draw, be small, her husband should, as now, be held accountable for the family expenses, and in all possible ways, the wife's equal authority with himself, and her equal right to the family earnings, should be made clear by statute. This grant would, if properly guarded, entail no great evil, and it would remedy a score of wrongs. For not only would it place a wife beyond the reach of a petty husband's financial annoyance—beyond the reach of his use of the money power to enforce the gratification of his selfish and unworthy wishes, but it would also save her from that loss of her children's respect to which her present helplessness in all money matters renders her peculiarly liable. Many a mother is in constant danger of having all of her directions that

involve an expenditure of money, countermanded by the father of the family, a most unfortunate condition of affairs as regards the children's respect for her commands.

The present lack of business-training of women is often urged as an argument against the placing of money in their hands. But I maintain that a woman cannot properly fill her lawful position as mistress of her household without monied rights, and further, that the holding of such rights will go far toward cultivating an ability to properly exercise them. In my judgment, the present financial responsibilities of women operate most unfortunately in every way. Many a husband, to-day, bears in his mind a certain irritated consciousness that his wife not only fails to comprehend his anxiety and toil, but that she seems to exist for the purpose of spending what he, with such difficulty, makes. A lady friend of mine, who was in moderate circumstances, once gave me quite a clear idea of a woman's position in this matter. It was her earnest belief that half of all that was made at the store belonged to her, by right of the share she took in the superintendence and care of the family. Furthermore, she felt it to be her right to constantly know how financial matters were progressing at the store. When her husband was at his best, he was ready enough to tell her, and she shaped all her household expenditures, as well as those belonging to herself individually, in accordance with such knowledge. If business were

dull, or if there were especial claims to be met, at certain times, she was most careful to indulge in no unnecessary outlay. But unhappily for her and for the family good, her husband was subject to prolonged fits of sullenness, during which time she could not induce him to give her the slightest hint as to their business affairs. And she assured me that when these periods of silence were frequent and prolonged, try as she would, to act upon the principle that her husband and herself were one, in power and interest, financially, as otherwise, she could not avoid lapsing, more or less, into a condition which she had not only condemned, but also contemned, when she had noticed it in other women, that of feeling that whatever she got was just so much gain. At any time when she was in full possession of business knowledge, if she had twenty five, or fifty, or a hundred dollars placed to her credit at the bank, she immediately thought of some bill, and strove to lay aside at least a part of the money to meet it. But when money fell to her, after a long period of business silence, she would experience a feeling of relief that she had received it, and would then proceed to buy what she felt she needed. As she knew nothing about the demands on the family finances, she could not carry about with her any deep personal interest, or responsibility in them. This lady is not the only one who has expressed such feelings to me, although her case was the more striking from the fact that she took such a busi-

nesslike, conscientious care of matters when she was in possession of the financial condition. I have seldom known a man who, in his business, felt a heavier sense of financial responsibility than did this woman, when her husband performed his part of telling her how matters stood.

I have thought that the course followed by most men — that of keeping their wives in financial darkness, and in every possible way removing from their mind all feeling of actual ownership in the family gains— must operate upon their sense of responsibility, as our far removal from all knowledge of the joys, sorrows, and everything else but the bare fact of the existence of our friends, would, by degrees, operate upon our interest in them. It is my belief that an increased financial authority and responsibility on the part of women would result most favorably in many ways. It would remove from a poor class of men that unlawful power to annoy, harass and compel, which they now so frequently use, and from a better class of men, would remove that feeling of irritation which is often excited towards their wives on account of a certain lightness in money matters on their part. It would remove from women one of their most potent causes for domestic broils, and would, I am confident, in no great time, result in an increase of self-respect, and an increase of financial ability. With few exceptions we should find that households were not only more happily ordered, but also more economically so in the better sense of that term.

As matters are at present, women exist under even greater domestic than political disabilities. A gentleman friend of mine once, when speaking of the propriety of a woman's taking an active interest in politics, even though she did not vote, said: "By inspiring and encouraging the actual workers, the ideal woman bears her part in all these things as truly as if she carried a spade in her hand."

It occurred to me that it must be rather difficult to keep alive an interest of such strength in a field into which one merely peeped between the bars of a high fence, in which one could have no individual share, and only such interest as could be derived from a feeling of general patriotism, or an occasional ambition for a friend. But even in such a disadvantageous position woman is better off than we frequently find her in that field, which we claim is so peculiarly her own, for she can, if she will, inform herself of political matters as fully as any man, but in domestic finances she is often destined not only to possess no authority, but also to live in all but total darkness.

Are we not guilty of the most manifest injustice when we insist, that even under such disabilities, women should, as a class, keep alive not only the strongest interest in the family income, but also the most conscientious sense of responsibility in its disbursement? Should it not rather be expected that, under such circumstances, all but women of very remarkable caliber would, in their expenditures, be guided by no higher moral stand-

ard than their inclination, and the amount of money likely to be obtained from their husbands. No man of reason would expect that the training a thief would give a child would develop a good citizen. Neither should we expect such conditions of domestic life as we have in this treatise endeavored to rapidly consider, to develop the highest class of women, or a very great amount of family happiness.

Some men may prefer weak, obedient, dependent women for wives, but they must not expect such women to make able housekeepers or efficient mothers. The weakness which is so strongly manifest in the desired direction, will just as certainly show itself where it is not wanted.

There is small danger that a woman trained to economize time, to accomplish important work, will be idle or extravagant after marriage; small danger that a woman of well ordered, thinking mind and strength of character, will be inefficient in governing her servants or in training her children, and there is small likelihood that such a woman will accept the inferior position many men desire to assign their wives. Love she may—for women of that type love with great strength; yield nobly at times she may, but she will not obey. Let a man marry a weak creature, a toy, if he wishes to be a despot. But even with a toy he may be frustrated, for a woman of that kind seldom scruples to gain by fraud what she dare not take openly. If his wife be weak without deceit, let him not complain if

the household be poorly ordered, and the children still more poorly trained. We would doubtless like to make women to our order, but Providence has prevented the accomplishment of that wish by taking the work upon Himself, and He certainly has not made women who will submit to all we would put upon them, and at the same time be all we could desire. But although we cannot mold women to our will, I believe it lies in our power to strongly affect their character and tendencies, and in no instance can this be more true than in that of their lately awakened political aspirations.

“Why, Madam,” I once said to a lady who was an ardent believer in the need, not only of female voters, but of female office-holders: “Why, Madam, do you desire to enter the political arena? I do not in the least deny your right to do so, if you wish, but it seems to me that you are in danger of selling your birth-right for a mess of pottage.”

She informed me that she had once been strongly of my opinion; that personally, public life was distasteful to her, while the attractions and rewards of domestic life were most alluring, but that many years of observation had led her to decide that the ballot offered women the only reliable means of redress for certain wrongs. She mentioned those inflicted by intemperance, and also those inflicted by woman’s financial disability. I could not fail to respect her motives; they were good, and her reasons sound. Nevertheless, I trust that her conclusions are incorrect—trust that

there are enough men, even in this day, to step forward and spare women the necessity for leaving that life for which they are peculiarly adapted, and in which they may wield the greatest power on earth, for the hurly-burly of politics, in order to obtain rights which should be theirs without argument or question. Many men of the best caliber oppose this step on the part of women; let them oppose it reasonably and ably by rendering it unnecessary. I once heard a man making violent complaint because so much of the public school training for children was left to young, incompetent girls, but he was well answered by one who said that as long as the position of public school teacher contained so little of money or honor as at present, it would not be eagerly sought by either men or women of educated ability, and that if we wanted an improved teacher we must increase the advantages of the situation. It is just so with the position of wife and mother. We need the highest class of women to fill it, and we should make it worthy of the highest. It may be objected that in the first instance, that of teachers, only the best could obtain a very desirable position, whereas, in the second instance, any woman was liable to become a wife and mother, and enjoy advantages of which she might be altogether unworthy. For that emergency we cannot well prepare, any more than we can prevent unworthy men from receiving those immunities and privileges which justice requires shall be granted to all engaged in business. We can, however,

find consolation in the knowledge that while unworthy women might abuse their privileges, those privileges, by reason of their educational powers, would have a tendency to make women less unworthy, and, furthermore, that the highest rewards of domestic life are only for the worthy.

I am not at all fearful that women will cease to occupy the position of wife and mother, no matter how unpleasant it may be made, but I am apprehensive lest, in their efforts to prevent the infliction of the domestic wrongs we have considered, they will expend in commercial walks much of that strength, energy, thought, and time which is so greatly needed, and can be so ably used in that most noble of all employments—the domestic training of children.

To make a hasty *résumé* of this treatise, I have therein endeavored to briefly set forth various causes which seem to me to have an important and general bearing upon the subject of marital unhappiness. I have also endeavored to make clear my belief in the possibility of remedy for such wrongs as I have portrayed.

Some of these wrongs stand quite within the province of the law, and it rests with the men of this present day to decide whether they will take the matter in hand, or will leave the women to work out their own salvation. It is not, and never can be a question of divided interest. Between man and woman, divided interest is impossible. That which benefits one, benefits the other; that which

retards one, retards the other, and that which degrades one, ultimately degrades the other. It is no more possible for men to hold the position of owner of human property, without deterioration of character, than it is for them to attain their best development and happiness in conditions of domestic life unfavorable for women.

The law has, upon some occasions, already come to the aid of mankind in this matter of granting justice to women. Some years ago it was permissible for a husband, even in our land, to mildly chastise his wife, if he thought best, and only a few years ago a husband assumed absolute control of even the wife's individual earnings, or in other words, the domestic slavery of white women was once legal in the United States. We have, through our laws advanced a few steps beyond this condition of barbarism, but slavery is not yet entirely abolished. Let us, as men, rise with one accord, and resolve that the close of this century shall see all human creatures in this land, male and female, black and white, in the full possession and enjoyment of freedom.

Divorce is but a poor remedy for the evils we have named, and we should cease to look constantly in that direction, striving rather to strengthen the idea of the sacredness of marriage; striving to rivet the marriage tie, while at the same time, we enact such laws that this tie shall not make scars. A lamentable condition of affairs exists when men and women clamor for easy divorce, and when the dissolution of the marriage tie is

lightly achieved and regarded. On the other hand, an increased stringency in the divorce laws could not fail to work great injustice and injury, in the present condition of female disability. Some laws should and must be made, but let them first aim to place women on a proper level in the matter of domestic advantages and rights. Then, I apprehend, there will be less frequent call to exercise their power in the matter of divorce.

But although there is an urgent present need in domestic life for the intervention of laws, yet laws can not achieve the great and permanent revolution in that direction, which is needed. The mothers must take this matter in hand, or it will go by default. Let them do their duty—let them exert their power to the utmost, and we may safely predict not only a diminution of calls for divorce, but an absolute cessation of such demands.

Let us consider this seemingly extravagant statement. Given a young woman and a young man, both carefully trained, in the best ways, by mothers of fine character and mental breadth, and we have, if not a perfectly happy married life, certainly one that can exist without the pale of divorce. I am well aware that this result cannot be achieved in a day or a year, but it is a possibility, and even probability of the future, and since it depends almost wholly upon the character of the mothers of our land, whoever takes steps to enhance the value of female character, is taking steps toward the achievement of mankind's highest hopes. Whoever strikes a blow at the family, strikes a blow at the commonwealth, and

whoever labors to elevate the standard of domestic life and character is, in the truest and highest sense, a patriot.

The day will come when it will not be enough for a woman to say "I was a devoted mother, always with my children," for this question will at once be asked "What were you teaching them? Were you teaching them purity — that purity, which includes chastity as well as the more common forms of virtue? Were you teaching them truth, honor, unselfishness, power of sympathy, veneration for God, and all that is best in mankind? Were you teaching them good habits of life? Were you endeavoring to so train them mentally, morally, and spiritually, as to develop in them the highest attributes of manhood and womanhood — attributes calculated to best prepare them to perform noble duties in life?"

And on the other hand, it will be mockery for men and women to profess honor for their mothers, if they do not honor them in their lives. Children are often told that, by their conduct away from home, they either compliment or slight their mothers. But while this is somewhat true, yet children have had but a few years of training, and may, with reason, be supposed to often temporarily depart from the injunction of their mothers. Grown men and women, however, could scarcely conceal, even if disposed, from the eyes of an observer, the kind of training that has made their characters what they are. Let men then learn that, by a good life, they can best honor their mothers.

It has been objected that such a condition of financial affairs in the family, as I propose, would overthrow the beauty of domestic life by abolishing dependence. Can dependence be abolished? Possibly, but first we must abolish anxiety and care; abolish pain, sorrow, death; abolish the human longing to love and be loved. We must abolish that instinct of the human heart which prompts one to grasp another's hand, in tearful sympathy, in the presence of some mighty calamity, in the shadow of bereavement, the shadow of that great transition from out this world into one beyond. We must abolish all that makes us cry upward to God; abolish all that stirs and touches the heart — yea, we must abolish the heart itself, for as long as it aches with pain, as long as it throbs with joy, so long will human dependence exist, so long will the husband turn to his wife for comfort, support, sympathy, companionship, and so long will she respond, and turn, with her needs, to him, giving and receiving tenderness and love.

There are those whose faces are ever turned toward the past; those who see all of worth in a time gone by, but I preach the gospel of better days. The march of the world has ever been onward, and onward it will ever be. The chariot wheels may drag at times; they may occasionally stand still; they may even slide back a step, but they will still roll onward. The life train that travels up the mountain side, may move slowly, very slowly, but it will not fall backward, for it is drawn by invisible power, and the cable is in the hands of God Himself.

